

JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH: A GLORIOUS NAME FOR THE NEW YEAR

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A SERMON
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DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,
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“The name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there [or in the Hebrew ‘Jehovah-shammah’].”
Ezekiel 48:35

THESE words may be used as a test as well as a text. They may serve for examination as well as consolation, and at the beginning of a year they may fulfill this useful double purpose. In any case they are full of marrow and fatness to those whose spiritual taste is purified. It is esteemed by the prophet to be the highest blessing that could come upon a city that its name should be, “JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH, the Lord is there.” Even Jerusalem, in its best estate, would have this for its crowning blessing; nothing could exceed this. Do *we* reckon the presence of the Lord to be the greatest of blessings? If in any gathering, even of the humblest people, the Lord God is known to be present in a peculiarly gracious manner, should *we* make a point of being there? Very much depends upon our answer to these queries.

Doubtless many would be greatly pleased if there were no God at all, for in their hearts they say, “No God.” God is not to them a father, a friend, a trust, a treasure. If they were to speak from their hearts, and could hope for a satisfactory answer, they would ask, “Where can I flee from His presence?” If a spot could be found where there would be no God, what a fine building speculation might be made there! Millions would emigrate to “No God’s land,” and would feel at ease as soon as they trod its godless shore. There they could do just as they liked, without fear of future reckoning.

Now, friend, if you would gladly escape from the presence of God, your state is clearly revealed by that fact. There can be no heaven for you, for heaven is where the Lord’s presence is fullness of joy. If you could be happy to be far off from God, I must tell you what your fate will be. You are now going away from God in your heart and desire, and at last the great Judge of all will say to you, “Depart, you cursed,” and you will then be driven from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.

I know that there is a company who can truly say that they feel only happy when they are conscious that God is with them. The place where they meet with the Lord is very dear and precious to them, because of His unveilings. The memory of holy convocations is sweet, because the Lord was among them. They would not care to go where God is not. If there were a place forsaken of God, however happy and full of merriment men might think it, they would not be found among its guests. Where we cannot enjoy God’s company, we will not go. Our motto is, “With God, anywhere. Without God, nowhere.” In Him we live, and move, and have our being, and, therefore, it would be death to us to be apart from God. Without God we should be without hope. Ah, my dear friend! Whatever your difficulties, and trials, and sorrows, all is well with you if God is your delight, and His presence your joy! But, however high your temporal enjoyments may rise, it is all wrong with you if you can rest away from the God of grace. The child must be in a sad state of heart when he does not care to have his father’s approving smile. Things must be terribly wrong with any creature when it can be content to walk contrary to its Creator. Nothing but the corruption of the heart could permit any man to be at ease away from God.

Will you permit these thoughts to saturate you for a little space? I have spoken them with the desire that each one of us may ask himself, “Is the presence of God my delight?” If so, I am His, and He will be with me. On the contrary, “Is the presence of God a matter of indifference, or even of dread?” Then my condition is one of guilt, disease, and danger. May the Lord, in His infinite mercy, set me right!

This much may stand as a preface, but it must not be treated as most prefaces are, namely, left unread or glanced over and forgotten. I pray you; carry it with you all along.

I. Now kindly notice that, according to our text, **THE PRESENCE OF GOD IS THE GLORY OF THE MOST GLORIOUS PLACE.** The prophet Ezekiel has been telling us many remarkable things which I shall not attempt to explain to you, and my chief reason for not doing so is the fact that I do not understand them. Even if I could open up every dark saying, it is not just now the time to go into an explanation of all the sublime mysteries which were seen by the eagle eye of Ezekiel, for I seek present, practical edification, and this we can gain in an easier way. It is clear from the text, that when God shall bless His ancient people, and restore them to their land, and the temple shall be rebuilt, and all the glory of the latter days shall arrive, this will still be the peculiar glory of it all, that "*the Lord is there.*" The prophet works up a climax, and closes his book of prophecy with these glorious words, "*the Lord is there.*"

What a glorious state this world was in at the very first, *in the age of Paradise*, for the Lord was there! Our glorious Creator, having taken the first days of the week to make the world, and fit it up for man, did not bring forward His dear child until the house was built and furnished, and supplied for his use and happiness. He did not put him in the garden to dress it till the roses were blooming, and the fruits were ripe. When the table was furnished He introduced the guest, by saying, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness." The Lord put man, not in an unreclaimed plot of soil, where he must hunger till he could produce a harvest, but into an Eden of delights, where he was at home, with creatures of every sort to attend him. He had not to water dry lands, nor need he thirst himself, for four rivers flowed through his royal domain, rippling over sands of gold. I might say much of that fair garden of innocence and bliss, but the best thing I could say would be the Lord was there. "The Lord God walked in the garden in the cool of the day," and communed with man, and man, being innocent, held high converse with his condescending Maker. The top stone of the bliss of Paradise was this all-comprehending privilege—"the Lord is there."

Alas! That has vanished. Withered are the bowers of Eden; the trail of the serpent is over all landscapes, however fair. Yet days of mercy came, and God's saints in divers places found choice spots where they could converse with heaven. *In the first days* our gracious God spoke with His chosen ones in their daily walk, as Enoch; or under the oak, as Abraham; or by the brook, as Jacob; or before the bush, as Moses; or near the city wall, as Joshua. Wherever it might be, the place became to them the gate of heaven, for the Lord was there. Amid a torrent of sin and sorrow, you may cross the stream of time upon the steppingstones of the places marked "JEVOHAH-SHAMMAH." The Lord's delights were with the sons of men, and to them nothing brought such bliss as to find that still the Lord would be mindful of man and visit him.

In the days when God had called out unto Himself a chosen nation, *He revealed Himself at Sinai*, when the mountain was altogether on a smoke, and even Moses said, "I do exceedingly fear and quake." Well might he feel a holy awe, for the Lord was there. I will not dwell upon the glory of the tabernacle that was pitched in the wilderness, with its costly furniture and its instructive rites, for after all, the glory of the tabernacle was that the Lord was there. A bright light shone between the wings of the cherubim, and so the Psalmist in later days spoke unto the Lord saying, "You that dwell between the cherubim shine forth." Above the sacred tent was the pillar of fire by night, and the pillar of cloud by day—an emblem of the constant presence of God, for all through the wilderness His glorious marching was in the center of the armies of His Israel. The desert sand glowed with the blaze of the present Deity. No spot on earth was so like to heaven's high courts as that wilderness wherein there was no way, wherein the Lord Himself led His people like a flock. Holy was Horeb, for the Lord was there. Then were the days of Israel's espousals, for the Most High tabernacled among her tribes, and made them "a people near unto Him."

In Canaan itself the days of sorrow came when the nation went after other gods, and the Lord became a stranger in the land. *When He returned, and delivered His people by the judges*, then the nations knew that Israel could not be trampled on, for the Lord was there. *This was the glory of David's reign.* Then the Lord made bare His arm, and the enemies of His chosen were driven like snow from the bleak sides of Salmon, when the rough blast carries it away. This was the shout of the joyful people, "The Lord of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our refuge." Never were the hills of Judah more fruitful, nor the vales of Sharon more peaceful, nor the homes of Israel more restful, nor the sons of Zion more valiant, than when to the harp of David the song was raised, "They have seen Your goings, O God; even the

goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary. This is the hill which God desires to dwell in; yes, the Lord shall dwell in it forever.”

You remember how, in later ages, when Solomon was crowned and his reign of peace had been inaugurated, *he built for God a temple* adorned with gold and precious stones, and all manner of cunning work of the artificer, but it was not that glittering roof, it was not those massive pillars of brass in the forefront, it was not the hecatombs of bullocks whose blood was poured forth at the altar, which were the glory of the temple on Mount Zion. Beautiful for situation, it was the joy of the whole earth, but its glory lay in this—“God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her and that right early.” The excellence of the temple was seen when, on the opening day, the Lord revealed Himself, and “the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.” Little remains for man to do when in very deed the Lord dwells in the midst of His saints. Apart from priests and ceremonies, that place is sacred wherein the Lord Most High has His abode. Say of any place “Jehovah-Shammah, the Lord is there,” and be it tent or temple, you have spoken glorious things of it.

I almost tremble while I remind you of the truest temple of God—the *body of our Lord*. The nearest approach of Godhead to our manhood was when there was found, wrapped in swaddling bands and lying in a manger, that Child who was born, that Son who was given, whose name was called, “Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” As for you, O Bethlehem, favored above all the towns of earth, out of you He came, who is Immanuel, God with us! Verily, Your name is Jehovah-shammah. All along, through thirty years and more of holy labor, ending in a shameful death, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. In the gloom of Gethsemane, among those somber olives, when Jesus bowed, and in His prayer sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground, He was “seen of angels” as the Son of God bearing human sin. Speak of Gethsemane, and we tell you God was there. Before Herod, and Pilate, and Caiaphas, and on the cross—the Lord was there. Though, in a sense there was the hiding of God, and Jesus cried, “Why have You forsaken Me?” yet in the deepest sense Jehovah was there, bruising the great sacrifice. The thick darkness made a veil for the Lord of glory, and behind it He that made all things bowed His head and said, “It is finished.” God was in Christ Jesus on the cross, and we, beholding Him, feel that we have seen the Father. O Calvary, we say of you, “The Lord is there.”

Here I might fitly close, for we can mount no higher, but yet we could not afford to leave out those other dwellings of the Invisible Spirit, who still by His presence makes holy places even in this unholy world. We have to remind you that God is the glory of the most glorious living thing that has been on the face of the earth since our Lord was here. And what is that? I answer, Jesus is gone, the prophets are gone; and we have no temple, no human priest, no material holy of holies—

*“Jesus, wherever Your people meet,
There they behold Your mercy seat:
Wherever they seek You, You are found,
And every place is hallowed ground.”*

And yet there is a special place where God dwells among men, and that is *in His church*. He has but one—one church, chosen by eternal election, redeemed by precious blood, called out by the Holy Spirit, and quickened into newness of life—this as a whole is the dwelling place of the covenant God. Because God is in this church, therefore the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. “The Lord is there” might be said of the church in all ages. I have seen the crypts and underground chapels of the catacombs, and it made me feel that they were glorious places, when I remembered that the Lord God was there, by His Spirit, with His suffering people. When holy hymn and psalm and solemn prayer went up from the very heart of the earth, from men who were hunted to the death by their foes—the Lord was there. In those dreary excavations, unvisited by sunlight and wholesome air, God was as He was not in the palaces of kings, and is not in the cathedrals of priests. In this land of ours, when a few people met together, here and there, to hear the gospel and to worship, they made cottages, caves, and hollows in the woods, to be “holiness unto the Lord.” Yes, and when crowds met beneath your gospel oaks, or gathered together by the hillside to listen to the pure word of grace, the Lord was there, and souls were saved and sanctified. When the Puritans solemnly conversed together of the things of God, and held their little conventicles for fear of their adversaries—God was there. On Scotland’s bleak moors and mosses, when the cove-

nanters gathered in the darkness and the storm, for fear of Claverhouse and his dragoons—God was there. Those who wrote in those days tell us that they never knew such seasons in days of peace as they enjoyed among the hills, amid the heather, or by the brook side, for Jehovah-shammah, the Lord was there. And so onward, to this very day, wheresoever the chosen of God lift up holy hands and worship Him, whether it is in cathedral or in barn, beneath the blue sky or beneath a thatched roof, anywhere and everywhere when the heart is right, and the soul adores the living Lord, this is the special glory of the place, that “Jehovah-shammah, the Lord is there.”

Flying forward, as with a dove’s wing, to the future that is drawing near, we think of the truth that there is to be a *millennial age*—a time of glory, and peace, and joy, and truth, and righteousness. But what is to be the glory of it? Why this, “Jehovah-shammah, the Lord is there!” The Lord Jesus Christ will come, and begin His personal reign on earth among His ancients. In like manner as He went up into heaven, and the disciples saw Him, so will He descend a second time, to be seen here among men, and His glorious presence shall fashion the golden age, the thousand years of peace. Then shall the nations shout “The Lord is come.” What hallelujahs will then rise to heaven! Welcome, welcome, Son of God! How will all His faithful ones rejoice with joy unspeakable and sing and sing again, for now the day of their reward has come, and they shall shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father! In all the glory of the latter days everything is wrapped up in this one word, “the Lord is there.”—

*“Oh, come, You Day-spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Your advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death’s dark shadows put to flight!
Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel!”*

Up yonder, where many of our beloved ones have already gone; up yonder, within that gate of pearl where eyes cannot as yet, see. What is it that makes *heaven*, with all its supreme delights? Not harps of angels, nor blaze of seraphim, but this one fact, “the Lord is there.” What must it be to be with God? O soul that loves Him, what will your fullness of pleasure be when you shall dwell with Him for whom your soul is hungering and thirsting! What joy to be “forever with the Lord!” This perfect bliss may be ours this very day. We little know how near we are to our glorification with our Lord. The veil is very thin that parts the sanctified from the glorified—

*“One gentle sigh, the soul awakes:
We scarcely can say ‘He’s gone,’
Before the ransomed spirit takes
Its mansion near the throne.”*

The joy and glory of those divine mansions is that “the Lord is there.” Heaven’s loftiest peak shines forever in this clear light—The Lord God and the Lamb are the light thereof; “the Lord is there.”

Enough of this. I have proved my point that the glory of the most glorious place is that “the Lord is there.”

II. Allow me for a few minutes to speak to you upon another point; THE PRESENCE OF GOD IS THE BEST PRIVILEGE OF HIS CHURCH. It is her glory that “the Lord is there.” Note this, and mark it well. Brethren, we as a church have grown to great numbers, and we are not deficient either in gifts or in graces, or in work for our Lord, but let me solemnly remind you always that our chief, our only strength, must always lie in this—“the Lord is there.” If the Lord should depart from us, as He has gone from churches which are now apostate, what an abyss opens before us! If He should take His Holy Spirit from us, even as the glory departed from the temple at Jerusalem, then our ruin would become a thing to mention with dread, a case to be quoted for a warning to future generations. O Lord, our God, take not Your flight! Abide with us, we pray You! Our only hope lies in Your making the place of Your feet glorious among us.

If the Lord is among us, the consequences will be, first, *the conservation of true doctrine*. The true God is not with a lie; He will not give His countenance to falsehood. Those who preach other than according to His word, abide not under His blessing, but are in great danger of His curse. If any man speaks another gospel (which is not another, but there are some that trouble us), God is not with him, and any transient prosperity which he may enjoy, will be blown away as the chaff. God is with those who speak the truth faithfully, hold it devoutly, believe it firmly, and live upon it as their daily bread.

May it always be said of this church, “the Lord is there,” and therefore they are sound in the faith, reverent towards Holy Scripture, and zealous for the honor of Christ! Trust-deeds and confessions of faith are useful in their way, even as laws are useful to society, but as laws cannot secure obedience to themselves, so articles of belief cannot create faith, or secure honesty, and to men without conscience, they are not worth the paper they are written upon. No subscription to articles can keep out the unscrupulous. Wolves leap into the fold however carefully you watch the door. The fact is, the most of people say, “Yes, that doctrine is in the creed, and is not to be denied, but you need not preach it. Put it on the shelf as an ornament, and let us hear no more about it.” Truth must be written on the heart as well as in the book. If the Lord is among His people, they will cling to the eternal verities, and love the doctrine of the cross, not by force of law, but because divine truth is the life of their souls.

Where God is present, *the preservation of purity* will be found. The church is nothing if it is not holy. It is worse—it is a den of thieves. Setting the seal of its pestilent example upon evil living, it becomes the servant of Satan, and the destroyer of souls. Who is to keep the church pure? None but God Himself. If the Lord is there, holiness will abound, and fruits of the Spirit will be seen on all sides, but if the Lord is once withdrawn, then flesh and blood will rule, and gender towards corruption, after its own manner, and the church will become a synagogue of formalists. Pray, my brethren, continually, that the Lord may dwell in our Zion, to maintain us in all holy obedience and purity of life.

Where God is, there is *the constant renewal of vitality*. A dead church is a reeking Golgotha, a breeding place of evils, a home of devils. The tombs may be newly whitewashed, but they are none the less open sepulchers, haunts of unclean spirits. A church all alive is a little heaven, the resort of angels, the temple of the Holy Spirit. In some of our churches everybody seems to be a little colder than everybody else. The members are holy icicles. A general frost has paralyzed everybody, and though some are colder than others, yet all are below zero. There are no flowing rills of refreshment, but everything is bound hard and fast with the frost of indifference. Oh, that the Lord would send forth His wind, and melt the glaciers! Oh, that the Spirit of God would chase winter out of every heart and every church! No human power can keep a church from the frostbite which numbs and kills. Except the Lord be there, growth, life, warmth—are all impossible. You that make mention of the Lord, keep not silent, and give Him no rest, but cry day and night to Him, “O Lord, abide with us. Go forth with our armies. Make us to be the living children of the living God!”

When the Lord is there, next, *there is continuing power*. With God there is power in the ministry, power in prayer, power in all holy work. We may do a vast deal of work, and yet nothing may come of it, and, on the other hand, we may only be able to do comparatively little, and yet great results may flow from it, for results depend not on the quantity of the machinery, but on the presence of the Lord.

Do you not all know persons who are not peculiarly gifted, and yet are eminently useful? You do not remark anything about them that is especially noticeable, and yet their whole career enlists attention by its power. Their words tell, for there is character behind them. A consistent life gives force to a plain testimony. It is not so much what is said as who says it. But that is not all; God Himself is at the back of the man who is living for Him. He causes him to speak in His name, so that none of his words fall to the ground. Is it not said of the godly, “His leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper”? This is so with every church where the Lord abides. His presence makes it a power with its children and adherents, a power with the neighborhood, and a power with the age. Its example, its testimony, its effort tells. God uses it, and therefore it answers its end. The power is with God, but the church is the instrument by which that power exercises itself. He uses a living people for the display of living power, and He gives to them both, life and power, more and more abundantly. As we desire power with which to labor for God, we must pray that the God of power will remain in our midst.

Furthermore, whenever it can be said of an assembly, “the Lord is there,” *unity will be created and fostered*. Show me a church that quarrels, a church that is split up into cliques, a church that is divided with personal ambitions, contrary doctrines and opposing schemes, and I am sure that the Lord is not there. Where there are envying, jealousies, suspicions, backbiting, and dislikes, I know that the Holy Dove, who hates confusion, has taken His flight. God is love, and He will only dwell where love reigns. He is the God of peace, and will not endure strife. The children of God should be knit together. It would indeed be a shameful sight should children of His family fall out, and chide, and fight. Saints who dwell with God love each other “with a pure heart, fervently.” Some professors act as if they hated each other;

I may not say, “with a pure heart,” but I will say, “fervently.” Where God is present the church is edified in love, and grows up, like a building fitly framed together, to be a holy temple in the Lord. Oh, for more of this unity!

Where the Lord is *there is sure to be happiness*. What meetings we have when the Lord is here! It is a prayer meeting, but when you have said that, you have not fully described it, for it is far more. It was an unusual meeting for prayer, for, God being there, every prayer was spoken into His ear, and all the desires and petitions of the saints were prompted by His Holy Spirit. Why, the very room was lit up with the glory of the Lord, and whether we were in heaven or not, we could hardly tell. What happy times we have in preaching the word of the Lord, when God’s own presence is realized! His paths drop fatness. What joyous seasons we have frequently enjoyed at the communion table! The provision is but bread and wine, but when, by faith, we perceive the real and spiritual presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the breaking of the bread we eat His flesh, and in the fruit of the vine we drink His blood. When we have gathered in the Lord’s presence we have sung—

*“No beams of cedar or of fir
Can with Your courts on earth compare;
And here we wait, until Your love
Raises us to nobler seats above.”*

At the Master’s table I have often been so blessed that I would not have exchanged places with Gabriel. The Lord was there; what more could I desire? Joy, delight, rapture, ecstasy—what word shall I use?—all these have waited around the table of fellowship, as musicians at a king’s banquet. If God is there, our heaven is there.

III. I shall now close by noticing, in the third place, that since this presence of God is the glory of the most glorious place, and the choice privilege of the most privileged, it is our exceeding joy. **THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD IS OUR DELIGHT IN EVERY PLACE.**

We will think of *our own dear homes*. What a delightful family we belong to if it can be said of our house, “Jehovah-shammah, the Lord is there”! Has it a thatched roof and a stone floor? What does it matter? The father of the family lives near to God, and his wife rejoices to be his fellow-helper in prayer, while the children grow up to honest toil and honorable service. Assuredly that cottage home is dear to God, and becomes a place where angels come and go. Because God is there, every window looks towards the Celestial City. It is a comfort that we need not go across the road to morning prayer, or step out every evening to worship, for we are priests ourselves, and have a family altar at home, whereon the incense burns both morning and night. We talk not of matins and vespers, but we glory that “the Lord is there” when we bow the knee as a household. What is more delightful than to gather round the family hearth, to hear the Scriptures read, and listen to the senior, as he talks to the younger ones, of what God has done for him, and what the Lord is waiting to give to all who trust Him? Free from all formality, family prayer makes a house a temple, a family a church, and every day a holy day. Truly, I may say of families of this kind, wherever they dwell, that it is “none other but the house of God, and it is the very gate of heaven,” for “the Lord is there.” Friend, is God in your house? If it has no family prayer, it has no roof to it. There is no true joy in domestic life unless the Lord is there. All else is fiction; God alone is true delight. I charge you, if your homes are not such that God could come to them, set your houses in order, and say, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Will you dare to dwell where God could not lodge with you? May all men say of your home, “The Lord is there!”

Here is *a Christian who lives alone*, altogether apart from family life. All his dear ones are dead, or far away. In his lone chamber, when he bows his knee in secret prayer, or whenever he takes his walk abroad to meditate, if he is indeed a true lover of the Lord Jesus, “the Lord is there.” Wherever the believer’s lot is cast, if he lives in fellowship with Christ, he may say of his quiet room, or of the garden walk, or even of the stable or the loft, “Jehovah-shammah, the Lord is there.” Many a humble attic is a right royal residence! For “the Lord is there.” Better Paul’s inner dungeon at Philippi, with his feet fast in the stocks, and the presence of the Lord, than the grandest apartment of Caesar’s palace and an unknown god. The Lord is very gracious to His lonely ones. They can say, “And yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.” Put you in a hospital, or in a workhouse; what does it matter, if Jehovah is at your side to cheer you?

Some of us can bear witness that we have had the nearest approaches of God to our souls in *times of intolerable pain*, and even in seasons of intense depression of spirit as to earthly things. “I was brought low, and the Lord helped me,” said David, and we can say the same. The Lord has said, “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you,” as much as to say, “If I am not with you anywhere else, I will be with you then.” In the furnace one like unto the Son of God was seen. If Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego never had that glorious fourth person in their company before, they had Him when they were cast into the midst of the glowing coals. Jehovah-shammah makes a seven-times-heated furnace a pleasant arbor. We may say of the refining fire, of the threshing floor, and of the oil-press, God has been there. In the time of trouble He has been a very present help. One might almost say, “Send me back to my prison again,” as one did say who lost God’s presence after he had gained his liberty. One might well cry, “Ah! Let me have back my pain if I may again overflow with the joy of the Lord’s presence.”

Dear friends, I thank God that you and I know what it is to enjoy the presence of God in a great many different ways. *When two or three of the people of God meet together*, and talk to one another about the things of God, the Lord is never away. You remember that blessed text, “They that feared the Lord spoke often one to another.” They had holy talks about heavenly things. It was such sweet conversation, that the Lord Himself turned eaves-dropper, and listened and heard. What He heard pleased Him so well that He there and then made a note of it; yes, and wrote it down, and ordered that “a book of remembrance” should be preserved “for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name.” Was not this sure evidence of His most gracious presence? John Bunyan knew that God was there when he went about tinkering, and came to Bedford, and there were three godly women sitting in the sun, at work, and as they worked they talked so sweetly that the tinker stood and listened, and was drawn to better things. By such means he became a believer and a preacher, and the writer of the “Pilgrim’s Progress,” which has so refreshed us all. The Lord was there, and therefore he dreamed a heavenly dream in Bedford jail. Wherever His people meet, the Lord is graciously near. “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.”

Yes, but *when Christian people go forth to work*, when you come to your Sunday school, or go out with your bundle of tracts, to hand them out in your district, or when you join a little band and stand on the street corner yonder, and lift up your voice in the name of Jesus, you may expect, if you go with prayer and faith, that it shall be written, “Jehovah-shammah, the Lord is there.” It is only a young man standing up in a cottage to speak, and he has not much to say, yet there are penitential tears, and broken hearts; it is so, for God is there. It is only a humble woman speaking to a few persons of her own class, and yet angels are rejoicing over a repenting sinner—yes, because God is there. It is only a little room in one of our back streets, and the city missionary has come in, and there are a dozen or two of the neighbors called together, and he is talking of Jesus and His love—oh, but if the Lord is there, do not tell me that the missionary is not in the apostolic succession; he need not claim it, he is himself an apostle of God to those poor people. He needs no gorgeous vestments or the swell of an organ, nor even the thunders of the multitude as they raise the solemn hymn. The few so simple and so poor have *God with them*, and it is enough. Wherever you are seeking to do good, in prayerful dependence upon the Holy Spirit, it shall be said “the Lord is there.”

And now, from this time forth, beloved, you that fear God and think upon His name, *wherever you go*, let it be said, “Jehovah-shammah, the Lord is there.” I often feel sorry when the Sabbath is nearly over, and so do many of you. I know you wake on Monday morning and take those shutters down again, or go off to that workshop where you suffer so much ridicule, or return to the ordinary grind of daily labor, and mix up with so many of the ungodly, and you do it mournfully. Now, pray that you may keep up the Sabbath tone all the week. Make every place, wherever you go, to be the house of God. A dear brother of ours went to a shop where he worked with four ungodly men, but his Lord went with him. It was not long before we had the privilege of baptizing that friend’s master and all his shop mates, for the Lord was there. The other day there came a fresh man to work who could not bear to hear a word upon religion, but our brother was the means of his conversion, and the new man is coming among us, warm with his first love. Our brother makes up his mind that he is not going to be conquered by any scoffers, but on the contrary he was determined to conquer *them* for Christ. He will not yield to the influences of sin, but he resolves, in the name of the Lord, that evil influences shall yield to the power of truth, and to

the attractions of the cross. Write across your workshop, “The Lord is here.” If you cannot do it literally, do it spiritually, “Jehovah-shammah, the Lord is there.”

Do not be found anywhere where you could not say that the Lord was there, but if you are called into the world in the pursuit of your daily vocation, cry unto the Lord, “If Your Spirit goes not with me, carry me not up hence.” Determine that you will have the Spirit of God with you, and that, if it is in busy Cheapside, or in the lonesome country while you are hoeing the turnips or attending to a flock of sheep, of every field, and every street, or every room, it shall be said that God is there. Take Jesus with you when you go, and, when you come home, may His Spirit still be with you! God grant that it may be so! The Holy Spirit can work you to this self-same thing.

What shall I say to those who do not know the Lord, and do not care for Him? O friend, the day will come in which Jesus Christ will say to you, “I never knew you: depart from Me, you workers of iniquity.” Do not let Him say that, but tonight commence an acquaintance with Him. May His Holy Spirit help you to do so! I am sure the Lord Jesus Christ could not say to me, “I never knew you.” It is impossible, because I could reply to Him, “Never knew me, Lord? Why, I have been to You with so many burdens, I have run to You with so many troubles, that I am sure You know me as one knows a beggar whom he has relieved many times a day—

‘Do You ask me who I am?

Ah, my Lord! You know my name.’

You remember me, for in my despair I cried to You, and You did relieve me of my burden. You know me, for in my sorrow my broken heart found no comfort but in You. You have known me all these years in which I have had to cry to You for something to preach about, and for help while preaching. You know how I have had to come to You and confess my failures, and mourn my shortcomings, and lament my sins, and trust in Your blood for cleansing.” My Lord cannot say that He does not know me, for He has known my soul in adversity. Blessed be His name, I know Him, and lean all my weight upon Him. They that know Him shall be with Him, and He will receive them unto Himself forever, and this shall be their glory—“Jehovah-shammah, the Lord is there.” With Him shall they dwell, world without end. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—ISAIAH 45:8-25.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—774, 847, 806.

LETTER FROM MR. SPURGEON

DEAR FRIENDS—In this, the beginning of another year, I find myself in Mentone gradually recovering health, after a period of pain and weakness. To begin Vol. 37 of weekly sermons has fallen to the lot of no other man. I am grateful for the peculiar privilege; and all the more so because all the previous thirty-six volumes continue to be purchased, and read, and preached. I beg each friendly reader to breathe a prayer for the preacher, and for these hundreds of discourses, that the Lord may use both the living voice and the printed page to His own glory, and to the salvation of men. Man’s thoughts change, but the Word of the Lord endures forever; and this is the Word which in these sermons is preached to men. May the Holy Spirit own the testimony!

Wishing to all my readers A HAPPY NEW YEAR,

I am, their servant for Christ’s sake,

C. H. SPURGEON.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

PLEASE PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.

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